

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for fastening a protective membrane for dental use to a jaw bone, the method comprising[[,]] :

first ~~the fitting into the bone~~ of a micronail having a head with at least one means of retention into the bone;

5        subsequent to fitting the micronail into the bone, positioning the protective membrane on the micronail; and, then,

[[the]] fastening of the positioned membrane to said means of retention on the head of the micronail.

2. (Currently Amended) A micronail for fastening a protective membrane to a jaw bone, the micronail comprising:

a shank; [[and]]

a head ~~characterized by the fact that the head (12) has means of~~ ; and

5        a retention means for fastening a membrane by trapping the membrane between at least a portion of the micronail and , ~~directly or with the aid of~~ a retention element, after the micronail has been fitted into the jaw bone involved.

3. (Currently Amended) The micronail according to claim 2, wherein the means of retention consists of a part of the head of the micronail onto which to engage the membrane, and of a retention element designed to circle or cover the head by superimposing on the

membrane.

4. (Currently Amended) The micronail according to claim 2, wherein the means of retention comprises an annular groove at the base of the head and a portion of the top of the head, the membrane being withheld between said groove and said portion of the top of the head by means of ~~[[a]]~~ the retention element circling or enclosing the head.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) The micronail according to ~~any of the claims from~~ claim 2, wherein the retention element consists of a ring or cap fitted to the head ~~of the micronail~~.

7. (Currently Amended) The micronail according to claim 2, wherein the head has a ~~means of retention for the membrane in the shape of a press stud~~ forming the retention element.

8. (Currently Amended) The micronail according to claim 2, wherein the head has, at the top, a perforating portion ~~(16)~~ and, at the base, an annular groove ~~(15)~~ and wherein said perforating portion, after the micronail has been fitted into the bone, acts as a means for perforating and guiding the membrane towards the annular groove at the base of the head, and said groove is intended to receive and withhold part of the membrane around the hole deriving from said perforation.

9. (Original) The micronail according to claim 8, wherein said perforating portion is separable from the head after the membrane has been secured.

10. (Currently Amended) The micronail according to claim 8, ~~wherein, with the head~~ (12) further comprising: a retention ring (21) ~~is~~ associated with said head for retaining the membrane level with said annular groove, said ring being fitted after or during membrane perforation.

11. (Currently Amended) The micronail according to claim 8, ~~wherein~~ further comprising: a supporting flange disposed between the shank and the head [[a]] said supporting flange, (14) ~~is fitted and~~ the annular groove (15) ~~is~~ being formed between said flange and the head.

12. (Currently Amended) The micronail according to claim 8, wherein the perforating portion (16) is at least partially tapered ~~so it is pointed~~ and joins the head through a weakened breakage part.

13 - 17 (Canceled)

18. (New) A dental method for fastening a protective membrane to a jaw bone, the

method comprising the steps of:

providing a protective membrane;

providing a micronail comprising a shank, a head and a retention element for fastening

5 said membrane to said micronail;

fitting said micronail into the jaw bone;

subsequent to said step of fitting the micronail into the jaw bone, positioning the protective membrane on the micronail head or on the micronail adjacent to the head; and

securing the positioned membrane to said micronail via said retention element.

19. (New) The method according to claim 18, further comprising:

providing said retention element as an annular groove at the base of the head and a portion of the top of the head, and

holding the membrane between said groove and said portion of the top of the head.

20. (New) The method according to claim 18, further comprising:

providing said retention element as a ring or cap fitted to the head.

21. (New) The method according to claim 18, further comprising:

providing the head as a press stud forming the retention element.

22. (New) The method according to claim 18, further comprising:

providing the head with a perforating portion; and

subsequent to said step of fitting the micronail, using said perforating portion as part of  
said step of positioning the protective membrane on the micronail head by perforating the  
5 membrane with said perforating portion for guiding the membrane relative to the micronail.

23. (New) The method according to claim 22, further comprising:

providing said micronail with an annular groove at a base of the head, with said groove  
receiving said membrane as a result of said step of positioning the protective membrane on the  
micronail.

24. (New) The method according to claim 22, further comprising; separating the  
perforating portion from the head after the membrane has been secured.

25. (New) The method according to claim 23, further comprising:

providing the retention element as a retention ring associated with said head for  
retaining the membrane level with said annular groove; and

fitting said retention ring to the head after or during membrane perforation.

26. (New) The method according to claim 18, further comprising:

providing said micronail with an annular groove at a base of the head; and

providing the retention element as a retention ring associated with said head for

retaining the membrane level with said annular groove.